



BITS OF GOLD

Montana Talking Book Library

Regional Library of the National Library Service
For the Blind and Physically Handicapped
(NLS/BPH)

Volume 103, Number 2

2003

MTBL INSTALLS LCM DIGITAL RECORDING SYSTEM

On April 22, 2003, Montana Talking Book Library (MTBL) became the first Regional Library in the nation to install a Low Complexity Mastering (LCM) digital audio recording system in its Helena Recording Studio.

This system, designed and developed by the National Library Service (NLS) audio production staff lead by Bill West, NLS Audio Production Specialist, meets their requirements for digital recordings. The LCM recording system offers many more options in the recording production process over the previous analog system. The greatest benefit we have found is the superb sound quality for patron listening pleasure. For now, patrons receive our locally produced MCB's on four-track cassette. NLS has a 2008 goal to decide on what will be the new patron digital listening format. The LCM recording system prepares the MTBL Recording Studio for whatever NLS chooses as the final patron digital listening format. This LCM recording system was made possible through donations from dedicated patrons and many other supporters of our services.

Staff and volunteers both are impressed with the LCM recording system. The volunteer readers, monitors, and reviewers are having fun operating the system, including a long-time monitor who claimed, "I'm beyond learning computers". Diane Gunderson, Recording Studio Director, performed most of the training for the first two weeks, with the assistance of three volunteers, Phyllis Herbert, Lea Blunn, and Giles Walker. She is impressed at how quickly and easily the staff and volunteers have caught on to the LCM system. This is the sixth month of full production. Our first digital audio book has already been completed! Six-Gun Syndicate (MCB 665) by Norman Fox was read by John Holbrook and monitored by Ed Canty.

**Small opportunities are often the beginning
of great enterprises
--Demosthenes**

NEW READER ADVISOR WELCOMED

Janet Hunter is MTBL's newest Reader Advisor. Her patrons are those whose last names begin with A-G. She will also be in charge of trouble-shooting computer problems, entering new patron information, and managing the patron database. For 26 years, Janet taught all grades except kindergarten in Montana's rural schools with a K-12 Library endorsement. Janet says she has always been a "Librarian at heart".

On a personal note, Janet collects animals and dragonflies. Her current pet family includes three cats, one dog, and four parrots. She loves to read and her favorite genre for the moment is mysteries. Janet appreciates the friendly atmosphere and joyful people that make it fun to be a part of MTBL. Working with books, being of service to people, and helping patrons are other reasons why she enjoys working here. We're excited she's here. Welcome, Janet!

LIBRARY HOURS: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm **PHONE HOURS:** Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
PHONE NUMBERS: 1-800-332-3400 or 406-444-2064

For patron requests or if you're not sure who to contact, e-mail us at:

mtbl@state.mt.us

MTBL WEBSITE: <http://www.msl.state.mt.us/tbl>
WEBOPAC WEBSITE: <http://www.klasweb.msl.state.mt.us>

REGIONAL LIBRARIAN: Christie Briggs, cbriggs@state.mt.us
COORDINATOR VOL SVC: Diane Gunderson, dgunderson@state.mt.us
CIRCULATION CLERK: Carolyn Meier, cameier@state.mt.us
MACHINE LENDING AGENT: Lee Madison, lmadison@state.mt.us
READER ADVISORS: Patrons with last names A-G contact:
Janet Hunter, jhunter@state.mt.us
Patrons with last names H-O contact:
Cheryl Christopher, cchristopher@state.mt.us
Patrons with last names P-Z contact:
Lee Madison, lmadison@state.mt.us

BITS OF GOLD EDITOR: Cheryl Christopher

LIBRARIAN'S LOG: from the desk of Christie Briggs, Regional Librarian

We have had many accomplishments and been greatly blessed in MTBL this past year. I'd like to THANK YOU for making most of them possible and share them with you!

Statistical Items of Interest:

Six MTBL staff and 101 Volunteers including Telephone Pioneers

- Served 2,678 active patrons.
- Processed over 15,029 patron requests; mailed 1,060 application packets.
- Circulated 139,641 books, magazines, newsletters and other materials.
- Processed 370 Interlibrary Loans to and from Talking Book Libraries in the United States, Canada, England, and New Zealand.
- Processed 13,538 patron phone calls.
- Completed 51 MCB books and 15 Montana magazines in the Deer Lodge and Helena recording studios.
- Received 1,864 new book titles including 8,061 copies from NLS.
- Repaired 4,885 audio books.
- Changed batteries, cleaned, and repaired 1,172 machines.
- Cleaned, processed, and repaired 229 pieces of accessory equipment.
- Awarded volunteers for their excellent assistance at the annual Volunteer Recognition event.
- Honored one of our staff—Carolyn Meier—who received the Governor's Award for Excellence.
- Hosted 45 training workshops and 195 tours.
- Presented 69 Outreach programs.
- Welcomed 21 new volunteers to MTBL!
- Contributed 12,553.5 hours by volunteers, which equals \$75,321.00 or six full-time employees.

First Time in History for MTBL

- The Director of NLS, Frank Kurt Cylke and Digital Transition Coordinator, Jean Moss, visited MTBL in October, 2003. During this visit they observed staff and volunteers using the newly NLS-created LCM digital recording equipment. They obtained valuable insights to share with other Talking Book Libraries across the nation.
- The Telephone Pioneer Repairmen, headed by Tom Basinger, relocated their shop to the Talking Book Library. Prior to their move on December 4, 2003, they had been located at 701 N. Main, Helena, for over 30 years. Planning and preparation for this move began in July, 2003, and has achieved an important long-range plan goal. A special thanks to Tom Basinger, Herb Blunn, Glen Rasmussen, Lee Madison, and Diane Gunderson for their hard work to make the space available for the move. Telephone Pioneer Repairmen's first repair day at the new MTBL location ran on schedule with minimal disruptions!

LIBRARIAN'S LOG: continued from page 3.**Major Projects Accomplished**

- Installed the new LCM digital-recording system in March, 2003.
- Received training from Margie Goergen-Rood, NLS Recording Studio Director, and Robin Beattie, NLS Digital Recording Monitor & Troubleshooter in September, 2003. They shared some valuable digital recording tips with MTBL recording staff and volunteers. Mrs. Goergen-Rood and Mrs. Beattie returned to Washington, D.C. impressed with the professional level of skills, dedication, and abilities of our staff and volunteers that use the digital recording equipment.
- Acquired permission in October, 2003, to reorganize the physical space in MTBL. This accommodated several long-range plan goals including: a main reception area; a dedicated patron area for walk-ins to use assistive equipment; more patron privacy while interacting with staff; better defined access for those needing easier maneuverability with canes, walkers, and wheelchairs; and a data-entry work area for volunteers to use exclusively. Now that we provide reception services, patrons calling have the options of talking directly to their Reader Advisor, leaving a written message with the receptionist, or leaving a message on their Reader Advisor's voice-mail.

Plans for the Future

- Obtained approval from the Montana State Library Commission to upgrade the MTBL database system and increase our patron WebOpac user capacity in Spring, 2004.
- Received approval to conduct a special Lobe Library Digital Study through June, 2004. Janet Hunter has been asked to lead this study. She will be working with a small group of patrons who have agreed to test four digital players. The purpose is to give valuable feedback to NLS on the development of their digital players. Results will be shared later in 2004.

This, in addition to the many major accomplishments in the past year, is made possible through generous donations from our patrons, friends, families, and supporters of MTBL services. We will acknowledge individually, in the first newsletter of 2004, those who have so graciously given to us during 2003. In the spirit of this season, we recognize that our accomplishments are a mere reflection of this generosity.

Best Wishes—from Christie Briggs, Regional Librarian

**I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.
--Charles Dickens**

STORYTIME AT MTBL

The Helena Family Fun Support Group is a cooperative for at-home parents. On November 14th, the parents and children ages 3-5 visited our library. Brittany Eldridge, an MTBL patron and volunteer, read the story If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Joffe Numeroff (RC 26192). Brittany read to them from a book done in a Twin-Vision format. She demonstrated how she types Braille on the Perkins Braille, which is used to produce the Twin-Vision books. The Twin-Vision format has a clear print of the text in Braille, which is overlaid onto the regular print pages of the book.

The children loved the story and asked Brittany lots of questions. They were also fascinated with the dots that form the Braille letters. The group toured the rest of MTBL. They even watched a book being recorded by one of MTBL's Recording Team on the new LCM Digital Recording System.

RECORDING PROGRAM: BEHIND THE SCENES, Part 2

An important behind-the-scenes member of a MTBL Recording Team is the **Reviewer**. When you are listening to your talking books, you don't think about pronunciation, word emphasis, or flow of the story unless it is not done well. First of all, the reviewer's job is to listen to be sure the book is recorded—word for word—accurately. Correct pronunciation is also critical. They check the flow of the story. This includes the reader being familiar with the material they are reading, proper emphasis, observation of punctuation, and phrasing. Each reviewer will check for background noises, too. Ultimately, their goal is for you to be able to get caught up in the book, enjoy the story, and not be aware of the technical aspects of producing it.

Some comments from our reviewer's are: "I insure that the recording of the text follows as closely as possible the written word and author's intent". "I'm not a censor...I don't allow my personal reading preferences to interfere". "I enjoy being the third member of a team dedicated to producing the best possible recording of a writer's work". "It's easy with such good readers and monitors". "It gives me great satisfaction knowing I have a small part in bringing so much pleasure to our patrons". "I love having people read to me...it's the Best Job in the World".

We appreciate each of the reviewer's caring and excellent work and hope you do too. Kudos to this great group of volunteers: Giles Walker...Jane Briney...Dorothy Carpenter...Gil Gilbertson.

RECENT TITLES FROM THE MONTANA RECORDING PROGRAM**MCB 614 DANCING TO WAR**

by Elfi Hornby; Reader: Dorothy Harper

Elfi Hornby writes about being one of ten ballerinas, all under the age of twenty-one, with the Molkow Ballet, a traveling company affiliated with the Berlin Opera. The experiences these girls were subjected to, especially after being sent to the Russian Front in World War II, are incomprehensible.

MCB 665 THE SIX-GUN SYNDICATE

by Norman A. Fox; Reader: John Holbrook

Ever since the night they shot his father in the back, Steve Reardon had sworn vengeance against the whole Storme clan. So when Spider Galt, boss of Rearing Horse Valley, offered Steve a marshal's badge, he took it. What better way to take his revenge? But in the fury of gun flame and bloodshed that marked his vendetta, Steve found himself pitted against a deadlier foe: the terrible Six-Gun Syndicate, a mysterious mob of gunmen who stalked him relentlessly, and marked him for a terrible death.

MCB 674 CORPSE IN THE FLANNEL NIGHTGOWN

by Margaret Scherf; Reader: Thomas Devlin

Mrs. Selma Colfax is a wealthy woman who has a summer place on Flathead Lake. She calls Reverend Buell to come see her there, as she feared something bad was going to happen. Upon his arrival, he finds Mrs. Colfax shot to death and some precious gems stolen. Now Reverend Buell must find the killer and the gems.

MCB 682 GRASS WOMAN STORIES

by Mary Ground; Reader: Lorna McMurray

Native American Mary Ground grew up in the Blackfeet tribe. These are short stories that were told to her. Her Indian name is Grass woman.

MCB 696 100 MONTANANS

Edited by "The Missoulian"; Reader: Judy Browning

"The Missoulian" picked 100 famous and important Montanans which included artists, authors, movie stars, politicians, and more. These are their short histories.

MCB 702 THIS IS A RECORDING by Barbara Corcoran; Reader: Ruth Straley

"You'll love Montana, darling—you've always had such a thing about cowboys and all that." These were her mother's words, trying to make Marianne believe that she really wanted to be left with a grandmother who lived about as far from Boston as anything ever was—in Montana. Montana was and was not what Marianne expected as she discovered the real Montana and herself.

MONTANA'S FIRST ONE BOOK

Montana Center for the Book is a program of the Montana Committee for the Humanities. The "One Book" concept which started in the Seattle Public Library, has spread across the country. This is the first year Montana has participated. Starting this past summer, the Montana Center for the Book invited all of Montana to read Winter Wheat by Mildred Walker (MCB 36).

This book was chosen to introduce a book about the West to a wider audience. One of the beliefs of the Montana Center for the book is that literature can help us understand each other better. They felt that Winter Wheat presents a slice of the West that many would find familiar. If you haven't read Winter Wheat yet, check it out—you might enjoy it.

For more information, contact Montana Center for the Book by either calling toll-free in Montana: 1-800-624-6011 or in Missoula: 406-243-6022. Their website is <http://www.montanabook.org>.

MONTANA AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION

On October 1st, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging promoted their programs and services for the elderly. They encouraged all ages to assist elderly families, friends, and neighbors so they can remain independent.

Montana's Area Agencies on Aging offer information and assistance, case management, and ombudsman services. These programs cover such things as in-home services, meals, retirement issues, and transportation. They also advocate for good care and living conditions for those already in assisted living or nursing homes. Call toll-free 1-800-551-3191 or go to <http://www.dphhs.state.mt.us/site/> to find out more about all of their programs and services.

MONTANA ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND (MAB) BROCHURE

MAB has developed a new brochure. It provides an overview of all the wonderful services they offer statewide. Please contact them to receive this brochure or for any information on any of their local chapters at the following:
Montana Association for the Blind, P.O. Box 465, Helena, MT 59624
1-406-442-9411

MAGAZINE CIRCULATION

MTBL offers a selection of magazines in the 4-track cassette format. When we receive a new issue, it is duplicated and mailed to those patrons signed up for it. In order to receive the next issue, the patron needs to return the previous one. The following is a list of the magazines we offer:

American History	Montana Magazine of Western History
Arizona Highway	Montana Outdoors
Choice	National Geographic Traveler
Country Music Magazine	Saturday Evening Post
Good Old Days	Smithsonian
Guidepost	Southern Living
Humpty Dumpty Magazine (ages 4-7)	Time
Modern Maturity	

We also offer Reader's Digest in large print.

Unfortunately, the "Wild Outdoor World (WOW)" magazine has been discontinued. There is no replacement at this time.

Other magazines are also available from NLS and directly from the publisher in Braille, four-track cassette, or large print. If you are interested in any of the above or would like to receive a copy of the NLS Magazine in Special Media catalog, please call 1-800-332-3400 or 444-2064 in Helena.

THE BRAILLE MIRROR

The Braille Institute of America in California publishes "The Braille Mirror". This magazine was listed in Part 2 of the NLS Magazine in Special Media catalog. Until October, 2003, it was offered as a free subscription. "The Braille Mirror" now costs \$15.00 per year for this Braille publication. When the NLS Magazine in Special Media catalog is reprinted, it will reflect the price increase.

For those currently subscribing to this magazine for free, you will need to pay the \$15.00 when you renew your subscription.

To renew or subscribe to the "The Braille Mirror", call The Braille Institute of America toll-free 1-800-272-4553.

WHAT TICKLES YOUR FUNNY BONE?

Do you know what makes you laugh? Laughter is as important for good health as hugs, air, food, and exercise. It balances your immune system, reduces stress, and clears your respiratory tract. Did you know that it is an aerobic workout? Just 100 times laughing is equal to 10 minutes on a rowing machine or 15 minutes on an exercise bike. It is not possible for a person to tickle himself or herself—your brain needs to be surprised for you to laugh when tickled.

These are some of the delightful data the MTBL Summer Reading Program patrons learned. They also enjoyed some silly songs daily jokes and daffy definitions. It was fun to read about the history of jokes. Do you remember Jonathanisms, Wellerisms, Tom Swifities, and Elephant jokes? How about knock-knock jokes? The laughing scene in the “Mary Poppins” movie and Abbott and Costello’s “Who’s on First?” routine can’t help but make you laugh.

Those patrons who completed their Reading Logs received gifts. All those who participated enjoyed their summer and found out “What Tickled Their Funny Bone.” January 10th is World Laughter Day—Don’t wait till then to find out what makes you laugh. Try to find something to laugh about each day. Laughter is Good Medicine!

Here is a sample of some funnies:

1. How do you throw a party in space? Answer: You planet.
2. Define sausage? Answer: A hamburger in tights.
3. Why did the Library book go crazy? Answer: It was talking to its shelf all day.
4. Where does a cow go on vacation? Answer: To MOOO-ntana!
5. When do candle-makers work? Answer: On wick ends.
6. What happens once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years? Answer: The letter “M”.

**Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile,
but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.
--Thich Nhat Hanh**

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY

MTBL honored its volunteers at The Volunteer Appreciation Day event on September 23rd at the Fort Harrison Service Club. The theme for this year's event was "Volunteers: On the Trail of Discovery". Author Ellen Baumler of Helena gave the keynote address, reading from her Spirit Tailings: Ghost Stories of Virginia City, Butte and Helena.

Awards were presented to those with several years of service:

35 years	Tom Basinger
20 years	Lea Blunn
15 years	Priscella Bucher and JoAnn Mayala
10 years	Cookie Basinger, Bill Bell, Mary Davis, Barb Harris, Myrle Tompkins and Cylene Woods
5 years	Don Copley, Vernie Kralicek, Alice Morse and Bob Tubbs

This years Recording Team of the Year award was presented to Jean Smith (reader), Darlene Lloyd (monitor), and Giles Walker (reviewer) for outstanding contributions to the MTBL Recording program. The Special Appreciation Award was given to Dorothy Carpenter, a volunteer who contributes considerably to MTBL in a number of ways. A veteran Telephone Pioneer member, Glen Rasmussen, received the Telephone Pioneer Appreciation Award. The Youth Volunteer Awards were presented to Kenzie Clark, Brynn McKinney and Erin Vashro. Alexis Lund received the first 5 year Youth Award.

All volunteers received appreciation gifts. Without their help, we would not be able to deliver the level of services we provide. Thank you, volunteers!

NEW VETERAN'S VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Blind Veteran's Association (BVA) is sponsoring a new Veteran's Volunteer Program. It is designed specifically to assist the Military Veterans of Montana who have low vision or are blind. Volunteers work closely with Visual Impairment Services Team (VIST) through Delma Sommers, VIST Coordinator. You do not have to be a BVA member to use these services.

Volunteers are members from the BVA and the Montana Association for the Blind (MAB) who have attended one of the Veterans Administration Blind Rehabilitation Centers. Do not hesitate to call for information on how they may assist you. Contact VIST Volunteers by calling 406-447-7624.

NEW EXPERIENCE WORKS RECEPTIONIST

Experience Works is a Federal Subsidy Program that offers training, employment and community service opportunities for the mature worker. It is a win-win-win situation where the community, businesses, and individuals meet each other's needs. The mature worker brings experience, reliability, a positive work ethic, good judgment, and loyalty to each position they hold. These skills are essential to the changing and competitive global economy.

Here at MTBL we are fortunate to have an Experience Works individual in the role of our receptionist. Iva Todd joined MTBL in August. She was born and raised in Iowa; and has also lived in California, Nevada, and Oregon. Iva now lives in Helena and shares a home with her daughter and four dogs. She has two daughters and four grandchildren. Iva is a retired hairdresser. One of the things she loves to do most is to help people. She also loves to bake, cook, read, and sew. Iva currently enjoys reading religious fiction and suspense mysteries. Her philosophy on life is "Life's too short...you've got to laugh". Iva does many things for us and we are happy she is here. Welcome, Iva!

PATRON PICKS

- RC 10803 Every Night, Josephine by Jacqueline Susann
- RC 24615 The Story of Holly and Ivy by Rumer Godden
- RC 25465 Dancing on My Grave: an autobiography by Gelsey Kirkland
- RC 31118 Journals of Lewis and Clark by Meriwether Lewis
- RC 52742 Big Stone Gap by Adriana Trigiani
- RC 55429 Breaking Clean by Judy Blunt

THE LIBRARY WILL BE CLOSED

CHRISTMAS December 25, 2003
NEW YEAR'S DAY January 1, 2004
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR DAY January 19, 2004

**Montana Talking Book Library
1515 East Sixth Avenue
PO Box 201800
Helena, MT 59620-1800**

**Free Matter
for the Blind**

Address Service Requested

**This newsletter is available on cassette, e-mail and large print upon request or
visit our website: <http://www.msl.state.mt.us/tbl>**

**Somehow, not only for Christmas,
But all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others,
Is the joy that comes back to you.
And the more that you spend in blessing,
The poor and lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's possessing,
Returns to you glad.
--John Greenleaf Whittier**

**Good Health, Hope, Joy, and Peace
to All in 2004!
from
All of us at Montana Talking Book Library**